

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 SANTIA 04447 01 OF 02 281749Z  
ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 NSC-05 INR-07 CIAE-00 PRS-01  
L-03 SP-02 H-01 DHA-02 PM-04 DODE-00 /045 W  
-----281757Z 118546 /40 L  
R 281635Z MAY 77  
FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5020  
INFO USMISSION USUN NY

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 SANTIAGO 4447

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT PGOV PFOR US CI  
SUBJECT: DEALING WITH CHILE'S EXILES

REF: A) USUN 1681; B) USUN 1451

1. FORMER CHILEAN FOREIGN MINISTER COLODOMIRO  
ALMEYDA'S DISCUSSIONS WITH USUN AIM AT STRENGTHENING  
HIS POSITION WITH THE MARXIST EXILE COMMUNITY BY  
ENGAGING THE USG IN A CONTINUING DIALOGUE.  
THE BASIS OF THAT DIALOGUE WOULD BE USG ENDORSEMENT  
OF THE CREATION OF A UNITED FRONT (KNOWN HERE AS  
THE "FRENTE AMPLIO") AGAINST THE PINOCHET GOVERNMENT.  
WHILE ALMEYDA'S DESIRES ARE UNDERSTANDABLE, WE BELIEVE  
THAT U.S. PATRONAGE FOR A MARXIST-CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC  
OPPOSITION MOVEMENT WOULD NEITHER SERVE U.S. INTERESTS  
NOR HASTEN A RETURN TO PARTICIPATORY GOVERNMENT IN CHILE.  
OUR REASONING FOLLOWS. WE WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE THE  
DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE.

2. RETURN TO PARTICIPATORY GOVERNMENT IN CHILE:  
THE MOST LIKELY SCENARIO FOR RETURN TO PARTICIPATORY  
GOVERNMENT HERE IS A PHASED PROCESS SHEPHERDED BY THE  
MILITARY. THE CHILEAN MILITARY HAS REACHED AN  
ABSOLUTE CONSENSUS THAT MARXISTS WILL NOT BE PER-  
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PAGE 02 SANTIA 04447 01 OF 02 281749Z

MITTED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCESS. EVEN ALMEYDA  
NOW SAYS HE DOES NOT FORESEE A QUICK OUSTER OF THE  
MILITARY BY POPULAR REVOLT, NOR A DRAMATIC CHANGE  
IN MILITARY LEADERSHIP THROUGH A GOLPE. WE FAIL TO  
SEE HOW THE FORMATION OF A UNITED FRONT WOULD DO  
ANYTHING BUT SLOW EVOLUTIONARY CHANGES IN MILITARY  
RULE. INDEED, THE MOST LIKELY OUTCOME OF THE FORMATION

OF A UNITED FRONT WOULD BE TO DRIVE THE ARMED SERVICES BEHIND PINOCHET AND THE HARDLINERS, AND STRANGLE CHANCES OF INCREASED FLEXIBILITY WITHIN AND AMONG THE SERVICES.

3. THE STATUS OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS: CERTAINLY THE LARGE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC MAINSTREAM RECOGNIZES THE PROBLEM OF COOPERATION WITH THE MARXISTS. WHILE ELEMENTS OF THE PDC FLIRT WITH ALMEYDA AND OTHER UP EXILE AND DOMESTIC GROUPS, EVEN THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC LEFT REJECTS FORMAL ALLIANCES WITH THE UPER'S. THEY KNOW SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT WOULD BE THE KISS OF DEATH TO THEIR OWN MODEST HOPES FOR A ROLE IN ANY TRANSITION FROM MILITARY TO CIVILIAN RULE.

4. ALMEYDA'S UNRELIABILITY: EVEN ASSUMING AGAINST THE LOGIC OF THE FOREGOING THAT THE FORMATION OF A UNITED FRONT WOULD HASTEN THE RETURN OF DEMOCRACY TO CHILE, THERE IS SOME QUESTION ABOUT THE CHOICE OF ALMEYDA TO BE THE STANDARD BEARER. THE FILES SHOW THAT HIS EARLY ESPOUSAL OF VIOLENCE, HIS ADMIRATION FOR CHINESE AND CUBAN SOLUTIONS, AND HIS DISTRUST OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS HAVE MODERATED OVER THE YEARS. IN SPITE OF THE MODERATE IMAGE THAT HE IS NOW PROJECTING, HE IS WIDELY DISTRUSTED HERE FOR HIS INCONSISTENCY. IN THAT CONNECTION, WE NOTE REF B'S REPORT CONVEYING ALMEYDA'S ASSURANCES THAT HIS VISIT TO THE US WOULD BE "LOW PROFILE, NO PRESS LOBBYING... (HE) DESIRES TO AVOID PRESS CONTACTS DURING HIS TRIP",  
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SECRET

PAGE 03 SANTI 04447 01 OF 02 281749Z

AND THAT HE WOULD NOT MAKE PUBLIC HIS LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT UNTIL THE USG HAD HAD A REASONABLE TIME TO REPLY. REF A REPORTS THAT ALMEYDA GAVE COPIES OF THE LETTER TO THE "NEW YORK TIMES" (WITHOUT WAITING A REASONABLE PERIOD), MET WITH EUROPEAN JOURNALISTS, AND GAVE A SPEECH OPPOSING THE JUNTA. THIS RATHER TYPICAL BEHAVIOR POINTS UP THE PROBLEM; ALMEYDA CANNOT BE TRUSTED.

5. US INTERVENTION: CONTINUING CONTACTS WITH ALMEYDA WOULD REPRESENT INTERVENTION IN THE CHILEAN POLITICAL PROCESS. THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN OFFICIAL US MEETINGS WITH FREI VS ALMEYDA IS CLEAR TO PRIVATE AND OFFICIAL CHILEANS. FREI IS A LEADER IN THE INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT, A MAJOR REGIONAL FIGURE AND A RESIDENT OF CHILE. ALMEYDA, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAS A LONG HISTORY OF SUPPORTING VIOLENCE AND ON-DEMOCRATIC NORMS AND TYPIFIES EXILED POLITICAL FIGURES SCHEM-

ING TO RETURN TO POWER BY OUSTING THE INCUMBENT  
REGIME. PRESIDENT CARTER'S STATEMENTS, BOTH THOSE  
MADE PUBLIC, AND THE PRIVATE ASSURANCES TO AMBASSADOR  
CAUAS, HAVE MADE CLEAR THAT THE USG HAS NO  
INTENTION OF MEDDLING IN CHILEAN POLITICAS IN GENERAL  
OR IN BECOMING INVOLVED IN OVERTHROWING THE PINOCHET  
GOVERNMENT. USG SUPPORT FOR ALMEYDA AND TACIT  
ENDORSEMENT OF THE ALMEYDA THESIS WOULD CONTRADICT THE  
PRESIDENT'S STATEMENTS.

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PAGE 01 SANTIA 04447 02 OF 02 281812Z  
ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 NSC-05 INR-07 CIAE-00 PRS-01  
L-03 SP-02 H-01 DHA-02 PM-04 DODE-00 /045 W  
-----281816Z 118979 /47

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5021  
INFO USMISSION USUN NY

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 SANTIAGO 4447

7. WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT THE MEETING WITH  
ALMEYDA BE A ONE SHOT DEAL FOR THE REASONS CITED  
ABOVE. MOREOVER, WE CAN CREDITABLY STAVE OFF  
CRITICS IN AND OUT OF THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT BY USING THE  
EXISTING POSITION THAT WE SEEK THE VIEWS OF ALL  
SIGNIFICANT SECTORS (ALTHOUGH THERE IS A REAL  
QUESTION AS TO HOW SIGNIFICANT THE MARXIST EXILES  
REALLY ARE). SHOULD WE CONTINUE A DIALOGUE WITH  
ALMEYDA, HOWEVER, WE WOULD NEED ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE  
TO FEND OFF THOSE SERIOUS CENTRIST FORCES WHO  
REMEMBER THE "OLD" ALMEYDA, AND KNOW THE  
MILITARY'S IMPLACABLE HATRED OF MARXISTS (AND THEIR  
OWN DISTASTE FOR MARXIST RULE). THEY WILL BE ASKING  
WHY OUR GOVERNMENT IS ESPOUSING A LONG TIME ENEMY  
OF THE U.S., MEDDLING IN CHILE POLITICS--WORSE YET  
NAIVELY--AND DELAYING THE RETURN OF DEMOCRACY TO  
CHILE.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**Reference:** 77 USUN NEW YORK 1681, 77 USUN NEW YORK 1451  
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**TAGS:** PINT, PGOV, PFOR, PINS, CI, US, (ALMEYDA, CLODOMIRO)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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